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ABSTRACT

In order to identify other libraries' policies regarding public access to personal computers, the Hudson Library and Historical Society sent a survey to the reference and/or informational services librarians in the 18 public libraries of the Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library Consortium. The purpose of the 32-item questionnaire was to determine if patrons were interested in using computers. The Hudson Library wanted to be able to justify the cost of computer hardware, software, and trained personnel to the Library's Board of Trustees. Seventeen out of the 18 libraries responded to the survey, a 94% response rate. Eighty-eight percent of the libraries responded that public access to personal computers was a service goal of their libraries, but only 80% of the libraries responded that they provided training for patrons who wanted to use the computers. Most of the libraries did not provide computer training for staff either; 70% of the people responsible for computer services taught themselves how to use the computers. The majority of the libraries had written policies for computer usage. Most of the librarians surveyed agreed that providing computer services to patrons was worthwhile even though they were struggling to find the time to be able to assist the patrons in using the computers. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included with the document. (Contains 5 references.) (DGM)

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ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS ON INFORMATIONAL SERVICES IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

A Master's Research paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Jeffrey John Seiler

August, 1994

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ABSTRACT

The Hudson Library and Historical Society perceives that it has the opportunity to serve its community better by providing public access to personal computers. In order to identify policy and interest regarding public access personal computers at other libraries, a survey was sent to the reference and/or informational services librarians in the public libraries of the Cleveland Public Library Consortium. The results of this survey indicate that a few public libraries have written policies regarding access to personal computers and patrons are interested in this service and will use it if a library provides it.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS ON INFORMATIONAL SERVICES IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

The Hudson Library and Historical Society perceives that it has the opportunity to serve its community better by providing public access to personal computers. In order to identify policy regarding public access personal computers at other libraries, a survey was sent to the reference and/or informational services librarians in the public libraries of the Cleveland Public Library Consortium. It was decided that professionals who work in an informational service area of the library and who interact with all groups of people within a given community would be in the best position to determine the interest in having public access to personal computers in their libraries.

Hudson Library and Historical Society proposed:

1) To conduct a survey of the reference librarians in the reference/informational services departments of the public libraries in Cleveland Public Library Consortium for the purpose of identifying policies for use,

2) To purchase personal computers for its reference department for the purpose of providing its patrons the opportunity to do information retrieval, use software and other computer applications.

SCOPE

A survey was sent to all reference librarians and/or reference personnel in the 18 public libraries of the Cleveland Public Library (CPL) consortium.

METHODOLOGY

The desired data was collected through the use of a survey. A four page questionnaire will be mailed to the 18 public libraries in the Cleveland Public Library Consortium.

The surveys were mailed back to the Hudson Library and were tabulated by hand at Hudson Library.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

No study of this type has ever been done at the Hudson Library and Historical Society or in the Cleveland Public Library Consortium. After reviewing the literature pertaining to public access to personal computers in public libraries, it was found that a majority of the surveys on this topic pertain to the 1980's and few have been done in the 1990's.

Survey results provided information on policies for providing public access computers in the Cleveland Public Library Consortium. Patron interest in such service in the Consortium might suggest that Hudson Library's patrons may also have an interest in public access to personal computers. The results of the survey provided the "proof" to the Library Board of Trustees to consider implementing this service at The Hudson Library and Historical Society.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis investigated through this survey was: If public libraries provide access to personal computers there will be demonstrated interest and use of computers in those libraries who provide this service.

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INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The circulation staff at the Hudson Library and Historical Society have mentioned to the director that a number of patrons, either in person or by phone, have inquired about the availability of computers and a computer room (with IBM/IBM compatibles or Macintosh computers) at the library.

Currently there is one Apple II E available which includes an antiquated word processing program and one copy of a desk top publishing program named PRINTSHOP.

The staff of the Hudson Library is impressed by the interest in personal computers (PC's) and is considering purchasing PC's for public use. The problem is that no study has been done at the library to determine the interest in personal computers. As far as it is known, there has never been a study done in the Cleveland Public Library Consortium of public libraries to determine the interest in a public access service for personal computers in this region.

THE NEED FOR THE STUDY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

There was a need for a study to be done to determine interest in computer use by patrons . An investigation into this area would provide the library with the necessary information to ascertain if this service and the cost of computer hardware, software and trained personnel could be justified to the Hudson Library Board of Trustees.

HYPOTHESIS AND OBJECTIVES

The initial hypothesis is that the patrons of the libraries involved in the Clevnet consortium are interested in the provision of publically accessible personal computers in the reference/informational service department. The objectives of having computers at Hudson Library are:

1) To provide the use of personal computers in the informational services area of the library

2) To increase interest in computer literacy in both the library staff and patron

DEFINITION OF TERMS

computer literacy- A functional familiarity with the capabilities and functions of computers

personal computer (PC)- A very small computer containing a microprocessor along with supporting devices, such as a memory system

reference librarian- The staff member in a particular library that is responsible for the management of the reference and/or informational services department

informational services- Any department within the library that is responsible for the accessing, retrieving and dissemination of information;The Reference Department

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Unfortunately, not all public libraries that responded to this survey had publically accessible personal computers and a designated person to oversee this service. However, a majority of the Clevnet libraries provided this service. These libraries provided the information needed to determine the interest and use of publically accessible personal computers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on the personal use of microcomputers in libraries was examined. The following questions framed the literature review:

1) Is providing public access to personal computers a service that a public library needs to provide?

2) Assuming that a public library is justified in providing public access to personal computers, what type of applications should be provided?

3) Do the patrons, community and the library really benefit from providing personal computer access in the library?

Much of the information found discussed software applications on microcomputers in public libraries. Some discussed topics that were related to personal computer applications in public libraries. Some articles dealt directly with the questions listed above.

The first question answered was: Is providing public access to personal computers a service that public libraries need to provide to its patrons?

Anderson asked the question "...is this public access to (personal computers) a legitimate function of the public library?"[1] He goes on to say that "There's obviously no simple answer to this question because there's no single agreed-upon 'public library mission'"[2] Mr. Anderson makes a simple but very true point. What is the mission of a particular library? Not every public library, given its situation, may see the need to provide computers for its patrons. On the other hand:

> "As we have moved into the post-Industrial Society-why hasn't the public library taken some responsibility for educating people in one of the

> most important aspects of this new society, the microcomputer? And, as the library strives to become a clearinghouse for providing access to information for the public, shouldn't we be helping the public to understand and use the major tool for information transfer - namely, the computer?"[3]

Abernathy stated that "the impact of computer technology on our society will be so pervasive and profound it will equal, if not exceed, the impact of the Industrial Revolution."[4] She considers computer technology to be the vehicle for "imposing and maintain(ing) social, economic and political order... ."[5]

Abernathy suggested that "...early exposure (to computers) fosters an acceptance and ease from which competence, talent and art can grow."[6] Though it can be argued that the public school system should provide the training, it has been found that elementary schools generally have a limited number of computers for their children. The use of computers in this formal setting is limited to computer-assisted learning which reinforces what was learned in the classroom.[7]

She pointed out that a facet of public library service that is rarely mentioned, though probably assumed, is the role libraries perform in "providing for unstructured, independent learning. In an informal, unpressurized setting children (or adults) can sample, experiment and become comfortable with a wide range of computer programs which are chosen for...their own individual merit."[8]

Abernathy considered the public library to be the best place to become acquainted with computer technology, yet stresses that:

> "the role of the public library in introducing this new technology should not merely be to provide equipment and programs;it should also be to present elementary instruction in how to use this technology. This role is consistent with that of the library in providing instruction in the use of other access tools."[9]

The second question was: Assuming that a public library is justified in providing public access to personal computers, what type of applications should be provided?

This question may prove to be more difficult that the first one to answer. There are a myriad of software applications available. A few guidelines may be helpful in selecting which software packages to choose:

1) The software package should be easy to use.

2) The software must have documentation that can be understood by the user.

3) Business software should be the software that is currently in use in the corporate sector.

4) Computer-assisted software should be self-contained and of good quality.

5) Software which contains online "help" is to be given preference.[10]

Some literature suggested that it would not be wise to have the same services that are currently in the local schools or colleges because services would be duplicated. This does make sense, depending on the service. Other writers said that the library may better serve its patrons by allowing access to the same software packages as the schools use. Users may learn more effectively if they are allowed to practice in an environment that is not threatening to them.

Jennifer Carpenter surveyed fifty-two libraries in the United States and discovered that there were six categories of software applications used by libraries:[11]

1) Educational	97% of the libraries
2) Word Processing	80% of the libraries

3) Programming	74% of the libraries
4) Database Management	60% of the libraries
5) Simulations	50% of the libraries
6) Arcade Type Games	26% of the libraries

Of the six categories mentioned, arcade type games were the most controversial. Some libraries thought that having this software produced too much noise in their younger patrons and disrupted the library.

An example of the varied applications for computers used by patrons was given by McCormick. She describes a typical day in her library:

> "One user, an older woman comes in everyday (and) has become fascinated by computer graphics and creates short animations on *VideoWorks*. A retired gentleman is studying advanced Spanish beside a man who is viewing a video on micros in business. A young mother is doing an advanced project on a database. Beside her a local professional man is getting to grips with a wordprocessor and is learning how to set up tables."[12]

The scenario that McCormick has just described could be representative of any public library that had access to computer technology.

Having decided that public libraries would be justified in providing a computer service in their institution and describing the applications to be made available, the last question is: Do the patrons, community and library really benefit from the offering of a computer service? Again, to answer this question a particular library would need to examine why it is in existence, what is its mission?

Fowler and Smith discovered that a majority of users who were drawn into a library because of the computer technology "had previously used the library only for books (they said that they had never known that the library owned films, magazines, records or attended any library programs.)"[13]

It is interesting to note that a library that provides public access to personal computers can use this service very effectively as an advertising tool. In fact, most databases that are available online are bibliographic in nature and will only tell the user where the information will be found. It is very logical then for patrons to come into contact with more library owned materials that they were not familiar with previously.

In closing, it is important for libraries contemplating a personal computer service to realize that:

> "public access to computer technology is a new service for public libraries. Still in the research and development stage, there is no one format that is right or workable for all circumstances. But, no matter what the individual situation, every library needs to find a way that will work, because public need and demand for computer access is there. Regardless of differences in cultural or socio-economic mix, there is not a community where the people, especially the children, do not need the opportunity to become familiar with computers. Technological change is an universal phenomenon. Providing an opportunity for computer literacy cannot help but further the goals of the library while enhancing its image in the public eye."[4]

METHODOLOGY

STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY

The survey method was used. A questionnaire of four pages in length was sent to the eighteen libraries in the Cleveland Public Library Consortium. It is estimated that the questionnaire was completed in 15-20 minutes. The desired response rate was a minimum of 60% of the reference librarians surveyed. If less than 60% of the librarians responded, then interviews schedule by phone were planned to the librarians who did not respond.

POPULATION

The population surveyed were the eighteen reference and/or informational services librarians in the CPL consortium. Due to the small population, no sample was taken.

DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTATION

The survey instrument was developed and adapted from the literature that contains surveys pertaining to public access to microcomputers. The survey was pretested on professional librarians in public libraries in the state of Ohio.

The collection of data was straightforward. The questionnaire was mailed back to the reference librarian at The Hudson Library and Historical Society. Once the questionnaire was returned, it was tabulated by hand.

The informational Services and/or Reference Librarians in the 18 public libraries of the Cleveland Public Library Consortium were sent a survey of thirty-two questions to determine:

1. If there was an interest and use by patrons of publically accessible personal computers in the Clevnet libraries.

2. The background of the librarians who supervise the above computer service.

The questionnaire was pretested before a group of public library librarians before the survey was sent to the libraries.

Two mailings of the survey were done. The first survey was mailed April 16, 1994. The respondents were asked to return it no later than April 30, 1994. Twelve libraries responded. On May 13, 1994 a second mailing was completed to the six libraries that did not respond in the first mailing. The respondents were asked to return the survey no later than May 26, 1994. Five out the six libraries returned the second set of questionnaires. In all, 17 out of the 18 libraries or 94% responded to the survey.

One library did not respond to questions 1-8, their reason was that their staff would fit all of the categories listed for each question. Also, not all libraries answered all 32 questions.

Questions 1 - 7 were designed to discover the background of the librarians responsible for publically accessible personal computers in the libraries.

Questions 9 - 28 were asked to determine who was responsible for the personal computers, if the libraries kept data on this service, and if so, what did the data report.

Question 29 was designed to determine the type of impact, positive or negative, the computer service was having on the libraries.

Questions 30 and 31 were asked to determine what security was involved in implementing a publically accessible computer service.

Question 32 was to discover if the librarians felt that having personal computer for public use was beneficial for the libraries.

FINDINGS

QUESTION 1

Of the librarians that answered this survey, 18% were male and 71% were female.

QUESTION 2

The age of the librarians: 41% were 31-40, 41% were 41-50 and .5% were 51-60. No librarians were 25-30 or were over 61 years of age.

QUESTION 3

The highest degree earned for the librarians was Master's 81% and one librarian was within 6 hours of their Master's degree.

QUESTION 4

The title of the librarians answering the survey varied:

* 4 were Directors
* 3 were Assistant Directors
* 1 was a Branch Manager
* 3 were Managers of Adult Services
* 1 was a Co-ordinator of Public Services
* 2 were Reference Librarians
* 1 was a Librarian
* 1 was a Co-ordinator

QUESTION 5

The length of time that a librarian had been in their current position also varied:

* 1 librarian had been in their position less than 1 year
* 7 librarians had been in their position from 1-5 years
* 5 librarians had been in their positions from 6-10 years

* 3 librarians had been in their positions from 11-15 years

No librarian had been in their position 16 years or longer

QUESTION 6

Of the librarians answering this survey, 71% had a background using computers while 24% had no background using computers.

QUESTION 7

Among the librarians that had a computer background:

* 1 librarian gained experience from a degree program

* 4 librarians learned about computers from continuing educational programs

* 9 librarians gained experience while on the job

* 10 librarians were self-taught

QUESTION 8

Of the 17 libraries that responded to this survey, 88% considered public access to personal computers a service goal of their library.

QUESTION 9a

From the libraries that answered the questionnaire and had public access to personal computers:

* 1 library had 25 computers (CD-ROM work stations only)

* 2 libraries had 10 computers

* 3 libraries had 8 computers

* 1 library had 5 computers

* 2 libraries had 2 computers

* 1 library had 1 computer

QUESTION 9b

Of the 7 libraries that did not have computers for public use, 71% were considering this service while 29% were not going to consider providing publically accessible personal computers

NOTE: The libraries that did not have computers for public access were asked to return the surveys. The following questions (10-32) were answered by the 10 libraries that provided public access to personal computers.

QUESTION 10

The libraries that did provide personal computers for public access gave ten different people and/or departments for who was responsible for the operation and maintenance of the public access computers:

* Adult Services

* All Reference Librarians

* Clerical staff

* Building Superintendent and System Co-ordinator

* No one person;Department/Branch staff oversee operation of machines - maintenance provided by a variety of vendors but we hope to change that this year

* 2 computer lab technicians

* Media Services Librarian/Assistant Director

* Automation Services Department

* Computer literate staff and/or vendor

* Microcomputer Specialist

QUESTION 11

The hours needed a week by the responsible parties to operate, maintain and provide help to the public for using the computers were:

* 3 libraries needed to schedule 1-5 hours

* 1 library needed to schedule 6-10 hours

* 1 library needed to schedule 11-15 hours

* 2 libraries needed to schedule more than 40 hours

QUESTION 12

The percentage of libraries that contained the following types of computers for public access in their libraries:

* 40% contained IBM computers

* 10% contained Apple computers

* 60% contained IBM/compatible computers

* 60% contained Macintosh computers

QUESTION 13

The percentage of libraries that used "other" hardware with their computers are:

* 30% use monochrome monitors

* 80% use color monitors

* 70% use 5¼" drives

* 80% use 3½" drives

* 50% use Dot Matrix printers

* 40% use Laser printers

* 80% use CD-ROM drives

* 10% use a joy stick

QUESTION 14

The percentage of libraries that used the following locations for their publically accessible computers:

* 20% of the libraries placed the computers in the Reference area

* 60% of the libraries placed the computers in the Children's area

* 20% of the libraries placed the computers in a glass enclosed area

* 60% of the libraries placed the computers in a separate room

* 30% of the libraries marked "other":

    - 10% of the libraries had their computers wherever they had room

    - 10% of the libraries had their computers throughout the library

QUESTION 15

The percentage of libraries made available the following categories of software to their patrons using the personal computers:

* 60% of the libraries provided educational programs

* 50% of the libraries provided database management programs

* 20% of the libraries provided arcade-type games

* 50% of the libraries provided computer-assisted instruction

* 30% of the libraries provided database searches

* 90% of the libraries provided word processing programs

* 80% of the libraries provided spread sheet programs

* 30% of the libraries provided instructional games

* 10% of the libraries provided "other" programs: CD-ROM picture books

No libraries provided accounting or programming software

QUESTION 16a

70% of the libraries had written policies and/or procedures regarding public access computer use.
* 50% of the libraries had minimum age restrictions. They varied and were as follows:

- Children 3 years and up are allowed to use the computers

- Children grade 3 and up are allowed access to the computers

- Children under age 12 needed to be with an adult

- Children 12 years of age and older are considered an adult

- Children from the age of 12 to 16 years of age with no previous computer experience will be given an orientation class

* 50% of the libraries required registration of their users

* 70% of the libraries had time limitations that averaged 2 hours

* 50% of the libraries required reservations for computer time

* 30% of the libraries had policies regarding the copying of software

* 50% of the libraries did not have written policies pertaining to the copying of software

QUESTION 16b

Three libraries attached their policies and/or procedures regarding public access computer use with their surveys. (These policies will be discussed later in the Findings section.)

QUESTION 17

Forty percent of the libraries keep data on public access computers.

QUESTION 18

Twenty percent of the libraries keep data on software usage

QUESTION 19

Three libraries responded to this question. The number of hours the computers were used per week ranged from eight to thirty hours:

- Library 1 stated this service was used 8 hours a week

- Library 2 stated this service was used 10-20 hours per week

- Library 3 stated this service was used 30 hours a week

QUESTION 20

The following percentage of libraries reported computer use on these hours during the week:

* 60% of the libraries reported use from 9:30 - 12:00am

* 70% of the libraries reported use from 12:30 - 3:00pm

* 60% of the libraries reported use from 3:30 - 6:30pm

* 10% of the libraries reported use from 6:30 - 9:00pm

* 20% of the libraries reported the computers were used whenever the library was open

QUESTION 21

The following percentage of libraries reported computer use on these hours on the weekend:

* 70% of the libraries reported use from 9:30 - 12:00am

* 70% of the libraries reported use from 12:30 - 3:00pm

* 60% of the libraries reported use from 3:30 - 6:00pm

* 40% of the libraries reported use from 6:30 - 9:00pm

* 20% of the libraries reported the computers were used whenever the library was open

QUESTION 22

100% of the libraries did not charge a fee for the use of publically accessible computers.

QUESTION 23

90% of the libraries do not have written policies and/or procedures for charging fees for the use of computers.

QUESTION 24

70% of the libraries do not have staff training and development involving computers for public access.

QUESTION 25

Among the thirty percent of the libraries that do have staff training and development, the following percentage of libraries accomplish it using the following methods:

* 20% of the libraries have computer orientation for staff

* 10% allow for hands-on experience in the library

* 20% have training on specific hardware

* 10% encourage staff to attend computer classes outside the library

* 50% of the libraries did not answer this question

QUESTION 26

Ten percent of the libraries had written policies and/or procedures for staff training and development concerning computers for public access.

QUESTION 27

Eighty percent of the libraries do not provide training for patrons using computers that are publically accessible.

QUESTION 28

Among the ten libraries that provide access to personal computers the following percentage of libraries have written policies and/or procedures on who may use the service:

* 40% of the libraries have policies regarding adults

* 30% of the libraries have policies regarding children

* 30% of the libraries have policies regarding adolescents

* 30% of the libraries have policies regarding the level of competence of the user before h/she may use the computers

QUESTION 29

Seventy percent of the libraries commented as to the impact this type of computer service had on their library:

"Customers find the service useful, but they tend to expect more help with specific software problems than staff can offer."

"Much staff time is needed to fix hard disk problems caused by customers either through inexperience or maliciousness."

"Very frustrating at times; not all Reference staff members are well versed in computers. Also, there have been occasions when the work flow has been interrupted due to computer users needing assistance. We have restudied the problems and are taking measures to make this service more efficient."

"Positive - it provides a service for a stated need."

"We have provided public access computers since 1981. It is a time consuming service but one which has been integrated into our range of public services."

"Patrons love this service! Patrons are very complimentary about the value of having public access computers. this service goes a long way in giving the public a positive, up-to-date and useful image of the public library."

"We need to "get the word out" more. We do not "advertise" because we do not have the staff to cope with the use. However, even with no marketing, the system is kept busy."

QUESTION 30

The percentage of libraries using the following security measures to protect their publically accessible computer systems are:

* 30% of the libraries use a locked room

* 10% of the libraries use security personnel

* 70% of the libraries use "other" methods which are:

- Locked computers
- A-V staff and children's room staff
- Security which limits access to the hard drive
- Passwords for each computer
- Chaining of computers to the tables
- Locks which are put on the floppy drives

QUESTION 31

One hundred percent of the libraries do not have written policies and/or procedures concerning security of the computers for public access.

QUESTION 32

Eighty percent of the libraries who responded to this survey and provided public access to personal computers strongly agreed that having this service had been a public relations tool for their library.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Eighty-eight percent of the libraries that responded to this survey viewed public access to personal computers a service goal of their library. Eighty percent of the libraries that are providing publically accessible personal computers strongly agree that this service has been a public relations tool for their library.

Reservations and time limitations for use of computers in the libraries are required, yet, very little time each week is spent maintaining and providing help to patrons using this service.

Eighty percent of the libraries do not provide training for patrons using the computers. The majority of libraries did not provide staff training and development involving computers for public access. Seventy percent of those who were responsible for this service had a background in computers that was obtained by self learning while on the job.

The majority of libraries had written policies for computer usage. Four libraries attached their policies to their questionnaire responses. All of the policies agreed on six issues concerning computer use:

1. A valid library card was required to use the computers.
2. Only data disks were allowed to be used by the patron. No patron owned programs were permitted to be loaded on to the computers.
3. Children under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult.
4. An orientation session involving computers was mandatory for all patrons with little computer experience.
5. Reservations for computer time were strongly recommended.
6. A time limitation of one to two hours was the rule. If there was low demand for the computers, an additional session could be scheduled.

Seventy percent of the libraries commented as to how public access to personal computers had impacted their library. Most agreed that their patrons appreciated the service. However, the service is very demanding of a librarian's time and who has limited expertise involving the computers. The majority of libraries agreed that this service was very time consuming and they were "struggling" to find the time to assist the patrons using computers.

It is interesting to note that even though the libraries are having a somewhat difficult time providing adequate support for this service, the computers are in use in the libraries from 9:30am until 6:00pm at least six days a week. Reservations and time limitations for the computers are imposed by the libraries to cope with the demand.

CONCLUSION

The results of this survey indicate that public access to personal computers is a service that patrons are interested in and will use if a library provides it.

Ten out of the seventeen public libraries of the Cleveland Public Library Consortium that responded to the Public Access To Technology questionnaire have this computer service in place and another five libraries are considering implementing publically accessible computers in the future.

Eighty percent of the libraries strongly agreed that having computers for the public was a public relations tool for the library. However, further investigation needs to be done as to how to define "public relations". What does it mean to public libraries today?

There is a demonstrated interest in using computers. Yet few libraries provide staff or patron training on computers. Even fewer libraries reported how many patrons were using the computers and the number of hours they were using them per week.

Libraries did have written policies regarding computer use by patrons but few libraries had written policies regarding staff training and development and security of the computers.

If this service is to remain useful to the public, at least three questions need to be addressed:

1. How are libraries going to find the time to adequately support this service?
2. How, on limited budgets, are libraries going to provide personnel to staff and maintain personal computer service to adequately serve their public?

3. Who is going to be responsible for the efficient operation of this service?

If solutions to the above questions can be found, public libraries will have the ability to increase further this kind of computer oriented library service.

NOTES

1. Charles Anderson, "Using Technologies," Wilson Library Bulletin (September 1989) : 90.

2. Anderson, p.90.

3. Anderson, p.91.

4. Janet Abernathy, "Computer literacy and children," Canadian Library Journal (February 1984) : 26.

5. Abernathy, p.26.

6. Abernathy, p.26.

7. Abernathy, p.28.

8. Abernathy, p.28.

9. Abernathy, p.28.

10. Angela McCmormick, "Micro-technology and Learning in the Public Library," Show Me Libraries (May 1985) : 24.

11. Jennifer K. Carpenter, "Microcomputers in Public Libraries for Public Access: A Survey," Information Technology and Libraries (March 1983) : 186.

12. McCormick, p.27.

13. Bonnie S. Fowler and Duncan Smith, "Microcomputers for the Public in the Public Library," Information Technology and Libraries (March 1983) : 51.

14. Abernathy, p.29.

Appendix A

PUBLIC ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Please Check those that apply

1 Sex Male_____ Female_____

2 Age 25-30____ 31-40____ 41-50____ 51-60____ 61-70____ Other____

3 Please check highest degree earned:

PhD ____ Bachelor____
Master____ Other ____

4 What is your current title at the library?

Reference Librarian ____ Clerk in Reference Department____

Asst. Reference Librarian_____ Librarian ____

Other_____

5 How long have you been in your present position?

Less than 1 yr____ 16-20 yrs____

1-5 yrs ____ 21-25 yrs____

6-10 yrs ____ 26-30 yrs____

11-15 yrs ____ More than 30 yrs____

6 Do you have a background in using computers? Yes____ No____

7 If yes, how did you acquire experience in using personal computers?

Degree Program ____

Continuing Education Programs ____

On The Job Training ____

Self-Taught ____

Other_____

8 Is public access to computer(s) a service goal of your library?

Yes____ No____

If your answer is no, please share your rationale for not having computer(s) for public use in your library? _____

_____

9 How many computers does your library have for public use?____

If your answer is none to question #9, are you considering providing public access to computers in the future? Yes____ No____

IF YOUR ANSWER IS NO, PLEASE DO NOT CONTINUE WITH THE SURVEY. Mail survey back in self-addressed envelope.

10 Who is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the public access computers? _____

11 How many hours a week does this person(s) spend operating, maintaining and providing help to the public for using public access computers?

1-5 hrs____	16-20 hrs____	31-35 hrs____
6-10 hrs____	21-25 hrs____	36-40 hrs____
11-15 hrs____	26-30 hrs____	More than 40 hrs____

12 What kind of public access computer(s) are available to the public?

IBM ____	IBM/Compatible____
Apple____	Macintosh ____

Other_____

13 What other hardware is used with your computer(s) for public access?

Monochrome Monitor_____	Dot Matrix Printer_____
Color Monitor _____	Laser Printer _____
5¼" Floppy Drive _____	CD-ROM Drive _____
5½" Floppy Drive _____	Joy Stick _____

Other_____

14 Where is (are) the computer(s) for public access placed in your library?

Reference Area ____	Glass Enclosed Area____
Children's Area ____	Separate Room ____
Circulation Area____	Other ____

15 Which of the following software categories are available?

Educational	____	Word Processing	____
Database Management	____	Programming	____
Arcade-type Games	____	Spread Sheet	____
Computer-Assisted Instruction	____	Instructional Games	____
Database Searches	____	Other	_____
Accounting	____		

16 Do you have written policies and/or procedures regarding public access computer use? Yes____ No____

If yes, do you have written policies and/or guidelines involving:

Minimum Age Restrictions	Yes____	What Age____	No____
Registration of Users	Yes____	No____	
Time Limitations	Yes____	How Long____	No____
Reservations Needed	Yes____	No____	
Copying of Software	Yes____	No____	

If yes to any of the above, please attach policies and/or procedures

17 Do you keep data on public access computer(s)? Yes____ No____

18 Do you keep data on software usage? Yes____ No____

19 If yes, what does the data show about:

Number of patrons that use this service per day____ per week____

Type of patron that uses this service is _____

_____

Number of hours this service is used per day____ per week____

The most popular software used is _____

_____

20 When are the public access computer(s) being used during the week:

Before 9:00 AM ____ 3:30 - 6:00 PM____

9:30 - 12:00 AM____ 6:30 - 9:00 PM____

12:30 - 3:00 PM____ After 9:00 PM ____

21 When are the public access computer(s) being used on the weekend:

Before 9:00 AM ____ 3:30 - 6:00 PM____

9:30 - 12:00 AM____ 6:30 - 9:00 PM____

12:30 - 3:00 PM____ After 9:00 PM ____

22 Do you charge a fee for the use of the publically accessible computer(s)?

Yes____ No____

If yes, what is the rate that you charge? _____

23 Do you have written policies and/or procedures for charging fees for the computer(s) for public access? Yes____ No____

If yes please attach

24 Do you have staff training and development involving computer(s) for public access? Yes____ No____

25 If yes, does your staff training and development include:

Orientation for staff____ Training on specific software____

Hands-on experience ____ Encouraged to attend computer classes outside of library ____

Other_____

26 Do you have written policies and/or procedures for staff training and development concerning computer(s) for public access? Yes____ No____

If yes please attach

27 Does your library provide training for patrons using computer(s) for public access? Yes____ No____

28 Does your library have written policies and/or procedures on who may use the computer(s) for public access?

Adults ____ Adolescent ____

Children____ Level of competence____

Other_____

If your library does have written policies on who may use the computers for public access, would you please attach

29 Please tell how having public access to computers in your library has impacted the library, either positively or negatively, in the space below:

30 How does your library maintain security of the computer(s) for public access?

Locked Room ____

Security Personnel____

Camera ____

Other _____

31 Does your library have written policies and/or procedures concerning security of the of the computer(s) for public access? Yes____ No____

If yes please attach

32 It has been suggested that having public access to computer(s) has been a public relations tool for the library. Do you agree? Please circle the appropriate letter(s) that best fit your library situation.

SD D A SA

SD= Strongly Disagree

D= Disagree

A= Agree

SA= Strongly Agree

Appendix B

April 16, 1994

Dear Informational Services or Reference Librarian,

The Hudson Library and Historical Society is conducting research to determine if providing public access to personal computers would be a worthwhile project to pursue and implement for the betterment of our patrons and community.

Since Hudson Library and Historical Society is a member library of the Clevnet System, we believe that the Clevenet libraries are representative of the patrons we have in our community. Your response to the questionnaire is crucial. Hudson Library is very interested in knowing how public access to personal computers has impacted your library. If another member of your staff might be in a better position to answer the survey questions, please feel free to give the questionnaire to that person instead.

You will find the questionnaire quick and easy to complete. The majority of the questions can be answered by placing a check mark in the appropriate box for your library situation.

The usefulness of the results depends on your thoughtful participation. We urge you to take 15-20 minutes to complete the survey and return it in the postage paid envelope no later than April 30, 1994.

Be assured that your responses are confidential. No information which would identify an individual respondent or library will be released to any outside source.

A result of the survey will be sent to you once the questionnaires have been returned and tabulated.

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Reference Librarian
Hudson Library and Historical Society

Appendix C

CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

LIBRARY	HOURS OPEN	STAFF FTE	COMPUTER STAFF FTE	NUMBER OF COMPUTERS	POLICIES FOR USE
A	63	14.60	.4	10	YES
B	70	66.49	---	5	NO
C	67	39.09	.1	8	NO
D	57	10.60	.1	1	NO
E	68	87.61	---	8	YES
F	62	13.70	---	1	NO
G	68	73.73	---	2	NO
H	58	544.20	1+	25	NO
I	73	93.50	.25	10	YES
J	64	38.29	1+	8	YES

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